

Ordinary Yet Essential (Nehemiah 11)

Proposition: In this chapter we are taught that these ordinary people were essential to God's plan.

I. The Selection of Ordinary People

- A. The Fame they were Lacking
- B. The Faithfulness to the Lord

II. The Surrender of Ordinary People

- A. A Committed Surrender
- B. A Complete Surrender

III. The Service of Ordinary People

- A. The Prescription of Service
- B. The Principal of Service

Ordinary Yet Essential (Nehemiah 11:1-4)

At Arlington National Cemetery resides the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. It is not a representation of many people, but an actual grave which contains the remains of a United States Soldier who for whatever reason could not be identified. His grave stands as a reminder of all these soldiers known & unknown who surrendered their lives on the battlefields for freedom. More than likely an ordinary soldier yet he like all the others who served was essential to victory. Here in Chapter 11 we have large groups of people some known some unknown that were essential to the recovery of God's Holy City Jerusalem. That is so much the way of things in God's Kingdom. In truth the majority of people in the family of God are ordinary people. But in this chapter we are taught that these ordinary people were essential to God's Plan.

I The Selection of the Ordinary
The walls were complete, every thing was ready. But there were so few that lived in the city. No walls for 150 yrs. Jeru was a

Everyone moved out to huts. But some self-de-

A. The Fame they were Lacking - If some
one were to ask you to count down the
more memorable figure in Bible, I don't
think anyone would look back for ^{names}.

These names are not all that recognizable.
Some we don't even know their names at
all. Yet they are essential to God's plan and
establishment of Jerusalem. 1 Cor 1: 27-28

God uses a shepherd boy to slay the Giant
God spoke through the boy Samuel. God
used the lunch of an unknown little boy
to feed 5000. We often equate those who

B. The Faithfulness to the Lord - One
can equate success for God w/ faith-
fulness to God. In each of these
cases the people applied themselves
faithfully to the work and sacrifice
God called them to give. If it was
to sell out and move to the city or
to work on the temple or sing or
pray or build. ③ 1 Cor 4: 2. What did we
see in Mark 9. No labor so small as to
be done in the name of Jesus shall lose its
reward. Jesus rebuked Pharisees: to be seen of men.

II. The Surrender of Ordinary People

There is a patriotic country music
song that says "all gave some and
some gave all." In the Kingdom of God we

1) 1 Corinthians 1:27-29 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence.

2) ...those who are doing a great work for God as those who are on the Television, on on the book cover. But that is not always the case. We don't measure success with God by the applause of men.

3) 1 Corinthians 4:2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. Luke 16:10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

1) ...committed to what God is doing here at this place! 1
Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye
stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the
Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the
Lord.

2) ...in our hearts. This phrase "willingly offered themselves"
means to be "impelled or incited from within." It has the idea of
inner generosity and willingness. We all at what ever age we are
ought to hold on to our lives loosely ready to make that
generosity and willing complete surrender.

all commanded to give. Some are commanded to give ^{all}.

A. A Committed Surrender - all of these in this chapter that came into the city to live and to work were committed to the purpose of rebuilding this city that had not too long ago been over run by the enemy. Before this reconstruction Jerusalem was a trash heap, a mass that ~~no one~~ ^{no one} wanted to live in. To live and work there was more than just a career move up to a commitment to what God was doing. In the surrender that God commands, are you committed to what?

B. A Complete Surrender - vs 1 said that they cast lots. 1 out of every 10 homes was commanded to move in Jerusalem. I believe that when it comes to serving God, I had to be compelled by a short straw. Others volunteered like verse 2. But this surrender was a complete surrender. Everything was left behind to follow after God. God may not call you to Africa or to the pastorate, we all ought to have that complete surrender.

III. The Service of Ordinary People
In this chapter we see how God employs every day ordinary people to do great works in his Kingdom.

for this young.

A. The Prescription of Service - We find littered through this chapter a wide variety of tasks prescribed to the people in the city. Some just lived in the city (leaders, castals, volunteers) started from scratch. Vs 10-12 800 folks that worked in the Temple. Vs 15-16 Levites worked on the outside of temple and were judges & counselors handling civil matters. Vs 17 & 22. These were prayer warriors & singers. The collective talents and labors made the city come alive. We the body need you.

B. The Principals of Service - I want to bring out some principals when it comes to serving God that you need to remember. #1. Popularity does not make your service valuable. Don't judge the work of your service by how many pats on the back you get. 1 Cor 13:21 #2. Every labor or service done in love for God is remembered by God and not forgotten. No one may see but God does. Heb 6:10 #3. Final rewards are based on faithfulness not applause. Luke 19:17

IV. Closing - Charlette Elliot was the woman who penned the song "Just as I am" She was an invalid from childhood. After overcoming a deep resentment toward

1) We the body here at Gethsemane need each and every member functioning in their role for our church to thrive and not just survive. I rarely come to someone and ask them to do this or that. I will if I have to, but you know you better than I know you. Find that role that labor how ever small it is and do it as unto the Lord and not as unto men!

2) 1 Corinthians 12:21-23 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.

3) Hebrews 6:10 For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

4) Luke 19:17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

5) ...resentment toward God because of her health, she gave her life to the Lord Jesus. But even as a Christian, like many of us, she had her fears, she had her doubts, she had her struggles - and on one day, one particularly sore point, she felt unable to come to God. She felt her inability to effectively get out and serve God because of her handicaps, and the fact that she was an invalid. Her brother was an evangelist, and at times she resented the successful preaching and evangelistic ministry, and

she just longed herself that she could be used of God - 'That I could get out of this chair and do something for God, my health is preventing it, why is this, O Lord?'. Is that you? Then in 1836 on the 14th anniversary of her conversion, while alone in the evening, at 47 years of age Charlotte Elliott wrote her spiritual autobiography in verse. One of the prayers was like an outpouring of confession to God from her heart, the feelings, countless feelings that maybe you and I can identify with at times. It's in the third stanza of that hymn 'Just As I Am', and it goes like this:

6) 'Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt.
Fightings and fears within, without:
O Lamb of God, I come, I come'.

7) That was her hymn. Many years later when reflecting upon the impact of his sister, the Rev Henry Venn Elliott said of Charlotte - listen carefully: 'In the course of a long ministry I hope I have been permitted to see some fruit for my labours, but I feel far more has been done by a single hymn of my sister's: 'Just As I Am'.